PLUS-SIZE BRANDS: A STUDY OF CONSUMER ATTITUDE AND BRAND PREFERENCES WITH RESPECT TO READYMADE APPAREL

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

To

Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies

(Deemed to be University)

By

Jasleen Rana

Registration number: 18/Ph.D./049

Under the supervision of

Dr. Deepti Dabas Hazarika

Professor, Faculty of Management Studies, MRIIRS

and

Dr. Rekha Maitra

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES

MANAV RACHNA INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH & STUDIES

SECTOR-43, SURAJKUND –DELHI ROAD, FARIDABAD – 121001

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES

Certificate

I hereby declare that the short synopsis "Plus-Size Brands: A Study Of Consumer Attitude And Brand Preferences With Respect To Readymade Apparel" being submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Marketing under Faculty of Management Studies of Manav Rachna International Institute of Research & Studies, Faridabad during the academic year 2020

It is a bona fide record of original work carried out under the supervision of Dr. Deepti Dabas Hazarika and Dr. Rekha Maitra has not been submitted in full or part to any other university or institute for degree or diploma. Further, it is certified that short synopsis is plagiarism free and the proof has been submitted.

JASLEEN RANA
18/PH.D./049

Dr. Deepti Dabas Hazarika
Professor, FMS, MRIIRS
(Supervisor)

Dr. Rekha Maitra
(Joint Supervisor)

(Chairperson, DRC)

Chairperson, CDP

ABSTRACT

The current scenario specifies that overweight and plus-sized individuals have increased in India due to change in lifestyles, busy work schedules, nuclear families, stress, untimely and unhealthy eating etc. But with the changing environment and level of empowerment, not only gender equality but also reduction in body shaming and body type consciousness is prevailing in the country. People have become body positive and in metro cities they have access to loads of clothing brands, both national and international labels, that too with an option to shop from multiple channels. To find the right size of ready to wear apparels has always been an issue for overweight, broad build and plus-size customers in India, but with progression in thinking, mentality and understanding, plus-size individuals now seek to wear readymade clothes, both western as well as ethnic and also intend to browse and choose from variety of options available for them. Retailers and ready to wear clothing brands are now awakened to the reality-based scenario of body types and functioning seek customer satisfaction by providing the right size and fit. In this era of consumerism it has become essential to understand the consumer attributes like consumer participation, brand consciousness, loyalty towards brands or labels, buying or brand emotion etc. which overall contribute in building the consumer's attitude, which this study aims to investigate. The study focuses on understanding the consumer attitudes, buying preferences and the considerations that are well-thought-out while buying and exploring plus size apparels in retail setups in Delhi.

Keywords: buying behaviour, consumer, brand preference, consumer attitude, plus-size apparels, retail buying, ready-made apparels, plus-size shopping

CONTENTS

1. Introduction…….5-14

1.1 Retail In India……..……5

1.2 Apparel Industry In India…….……..6

1.3 Evolution of plus-size clothing…….……10

1.4 Scope for Growth and Opportunities…….……...12

1.5 Vanity Sizing……14

2. Review of Literature……...15-19

2.1 Plus-size consumer behavior……16

2.2 Plus-size buying in India…….....17

2.3 Research Gap……19

3. Description of Broad Area……18-19

4. Objectives of the Study……...…….19-20

5. Research Methodology……..……. 20-21

a. Geographic Area of the research…….…..20

b. Research Design…….....20

c. Data Collection……..…21

d. Data Analysis…….…....21

6. Proposed Outcome of the Research…….. 22

7. References……23-24

1. Introduction

Consumer behaviour is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and all the activities associated with the purchase, use and disposal of goods and services (Schiffman, 2008).

Study of buying behaviour is an inter-disciplinary social science which is an element of psychology, sociology, ethnography, economics and marketing. As marketing revolves around the consumer, it becomes very essential to understand the consumer's buying behaviour which includes consumer's mental, emotional and behavioural responses.

Many factors affect buying behavior that can be further categorized into demographic, socio-cultural, and psychological factors.

1.1 Retail in India

Retail industry is regarded as one of the most fast-paced, explosive and dynamic industries that have contributed to India's growth economically. In a short span of time, the retail segment in India has known to be one of the most lucrative and emerging retail markets in the current world. With the entry of foreign retailers and brands it surely gives consumers a varied and diverse exposure to brands of products and services. With this emerging and ever-growing phase of retail in India, it contributes in a significant manner on the buying behaviour of consumers as well as increasing the chances of paralysis of purchase decision. With the plethora of brand choices and choices within brands is spoilt for choice. The trend is increasing rapidly for the uninitiated and novice consumers finding themselves in unchartered behavioural dynamics.

Retailing both online and traditional has greatly changed the fate of numerous organisations in the world. In this dynamic and growing retail in India, it has become inescapable for the companies to understand and comprehend how to hold their existing market share as well as to look for opportunities to enhance it further. With the entry of relatively larger players and foreign retail outlets, this market is getting organized and structured gradually. Competition has been rising intensely and it was concluded that existing consumers cause better margins and profits than the new ones. (Smith, 2004)

Organised retail has been growing over the years at an ever-increasing pace. Indian retail segment is estimated to grow by 60% to reach $ 1.1 trillion (USD) by the year 2020, with a drastic change in factors like incomes and lifestyles by the middle and upper-middle class and enhanced technological advancements leading to better digital connectivity. Whereas the retail market as a whole is estimated to grow at12% per year, with a great expansion in the modern trade would that is said to be as fast at 20% annually and traditional trade at 10 % (Indian Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF) Report June 2018).

Indian B2C sector's total potential is assessed to be $26 billion(US), out of which $3 billion was contributed in a time period of only three years from sixteen product types, according to a study by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) in 2018.

Satyanaran in her article in the Retailer magazine states that even after a great boom and acceptance of online shopping and an era of omni-channel presence of products brick and mortar are still a favourite amongst the shoppers in India. It is an interesting scenario to understand how customers are still loyal to the brick and mortar retail setup. She also emphasizes that the expectations and shopping trends amongst the millennial shoppers is much different than the old-time consumers, they also have a peer influence on their buying patterns. (Satyanarayan, 2018)

Successful Indian online ventures and e-commerce businesses i.eNykaa and Zivame have also invested humungous amounts in the brick and mortar setups, which states how significant the tangible shopping experience.

1.2 Apparel Industry in India

The present apparel industry of the country is dominated by ready-to-wear sector with its market size of near to $56 billion, with an 84% share which is rapidly growing at a CAGR of 10-11% as per the Clothing Manufacturing Association of India(CMAI) in 2018 (Jha, 2018)

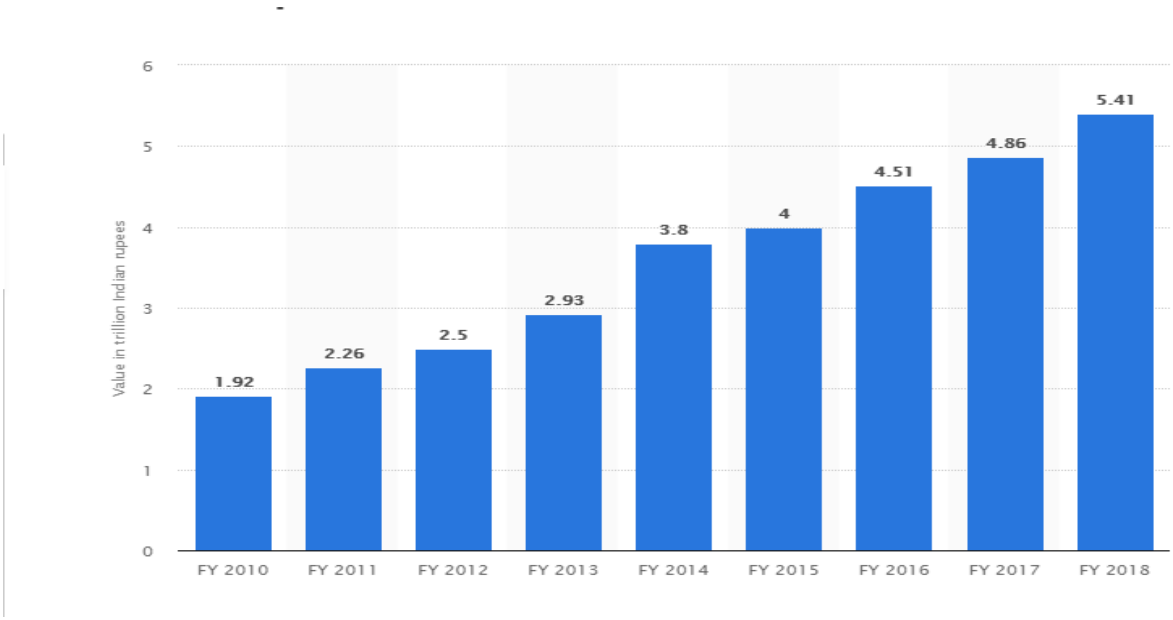


Figure no. 1: Indian Domestic Apparel Market- 2010-2018 (in trillion INR)

Source: Clothing Manufacturers' Association of India (CMAI) Report (2018)

The above chart explains the significant growth of the Indian economy, which has led to a boost in the apparel industry. The illustration clearly shows an increasing growth in the industry over the last nine years from 2010 to 2018. The domestic market in India is a very widespread and fast-growing industry, which gives immense opportunities for smaller niches to pitch in.

Indian diversity also influences festival and occasion oriented buying pattern especially ethnic wear. Indian festivals like Diwali, Holi, Raksha Bandhan, Eid and Baisakhi are the common seasons for ethnic apparel buying in Northern India; people tend to seek new clothes on such occasions that give a profitable opportunity to retailers selling ethnic wear.

1.2.1 Plus Size Apparels

In the modern era of consumer-oriented world and peak of consumerism, shopping has become an easy task for customers with rapidly increasing choices and preferences at the same time. Shoppers today are exposed to multiple brands and have a choice of buying from multiple channels, both offline as well as online. With a plethora of varied offerings available in the market, there is a niche segment, which is still less explored. This is the plus-size apparel segment. With increase in body positivity and consumers with self-acceptance, they today seek

to purchase extended sizes or plus-sizes, as it is popularly known in ready-to-wear clothing sector rather than, moving towards made-to-order and customized stitching.

Apparel Export Promotion Council released a report in 2018, which stated that the progression in the apparel market in the United Kingdom, has also been contributed by niche markets, such as plus-size clothing, which garnered £18.7 million in 2016. Plus-size apparels in many styles and brands has currently taken over the women's apparel market like a storm.
"Plus-size" is a common term particular to a specific segment of clothes, which are designed and made in larger than the usual sizes. It is done for individuals who have a larger/broad built or are overweight than the common sized people. Terms like "curvy" have been used for plus-size women clothing ranges and terms like "big and tall" are used for male's plus-sized clothing.

1.2.2 Overview of Plus-size Apparel Market in India

Unlike the previous decade and a half, people now are not conscious about the extended sizes and indeed demand a better fit and seek variety while selecting and buying apparels. The standard sizes of ready-to-wear apparels are no longer applicable to the major chunk of the population in this niche segment. Demanding and selecting plus-size is no longer a source of embarrassment or shame amongst the larger than usual sized individuals in the country. Various studies mentioned below aim to show a change in the apparel market in India with a focus on few major retail players offering apparels under this niche category. It is very evident that this sector of the apparel retail market has a lot to offer and further has a lucrative scope for growth.
In an article published in Economic Times, it was found and stated that plus-size consumers seek clothing that is beyond functional, notes Shital Mehta, CEO, Pantaloon Fashion Retail, who launched Alto Moda in 2014. She emphasised on the fact that this category of apparels is under-served but does excite the retailers seeking growth in the fashion industry as she concluded with an expectation of 5% contribution to the store's sale from Alto Moda (Ganguly, 2015).

The Fibre2Fashion Report published in 2017 reflected the below-mentioned data where it was determined that 77% women agreed to have had difficulty in finding well-fitted garments, 73% women stated that the sizes under this category vary across brands and 49% of women felt that they need to get the outfits altered to get the right fit.

Tabe no. 1: Comments of Plus size women in India

Comments Quoted by the Respondents	Percentage of Women respondents
"It is difficult to find well-fitted garments"	77%
"I often need tailoring to get the right fit"	49%
"Sizes are very inconsistent across"	73%
"I never or rarely find flattering clothing"	46%

Source: Fibre2Fashion Report 2017

Mentioned in an online article published in the financial express in 2017, The Vice President, Menswear, Myntra claimed that the plus-size sector is expected to reach a worth of $5-6 billion in the $40-billion online fashion clothing segment of India (Ready-to-wear) market by the next year, which accounts for 10-12% of the overall market. Myntra, in fact stocks over 10,000 styles in the plus-size category on their mobile application.

At the Lakme India Fashion Week 2017 plus-size men and women walked the ramp and promoted larger sizes as a success in breaking the stereotypical mind-set of fashion shows and ramp walks. Brands like aLL were found embracing plus-size fashion wear by promoting it through such platforms.

Manish Aziz, Head of the famous plus-size brand All, concluded the purpose of the increasing interest and demand. He said, "India, currently is the world's 3rd country to have the highest grossing number of larger than usual bodied persons followed by highly developed nations like USA aong with China. Several organised retailers have realised the enormous potential and have started to accommodate to this category of readymade apparels. The future scope, certainly, is very bright. The industry is emerging and is expected to grow at 25% per annum." as shown in a study taken care by the Future group on lifestyle and clothing brands in 2018. The report also stated that Srinivasa Rao, Sr. Vice President (Marketing), Lifestyle International quoted that "The plus-size fashion sector has vast potential though it is currently under-serviced in India. Plus-size brand offered by Lifestyle ie; Nexus addresses the growing segment of larger sizes and offers contemporary fashion apparels to choose from. The collection is fashionable, globally

inspired and symbolises our belief that real fashion is not limited by size (Future Lifestyle Fashion Investor Deck, 2018).

1.3 Evolution of Plus-Size Clothing

Dia&Co did a detailed analysis in the year 2019 on how plus-size clothing has evolved through the years since the 1800s. This brand is a well renowned plus-size offering retail setup in the USA which deals and offers extended and larger that usual sized apparel for women.

1800: During this time ideally the body shape was known to be curvy according to Dr Lauren Downing, a renowned professor of fashion studies at the Columbia College, Chicago, whereas it changed during 1900s.

- ✓ Due to technological advancement, customised (made-to-order) clothes manufacturing reduced to mass manufacturing of clothes and production of ready-made garments.
- ✓ It lead to the community's unique problems as buying or shopping from stores was difficult due to the unavailability of larger sizes and stores had poor customer service.

1904: Lane Bryant was the first plus-size brand that came into existence.

1919: Lane Bryant announced "designing models for women who require extra sizes is an art in itself"

"Your appearance is more a matter of clothes than a matter of actual weight" she quoted.

1952: An advertising campaign of "Calling all chubbies" illustrated plus-sized model introduced as "chub". This campaign focused on sensitivity.

1960: During this phase, the revolution pertaining to body acceptance had spread all over. Compelling signals from Vietnam War protests, ladies joined hands to fight weight biasedness and body shaming through the fat-acceptance movement.

After the new millennium, a new wave of body-positivity entered society and market places.

2008: This year saw abooming plus-size fashion blog revolution, with big pioneers like Marie Denee, Gabi Fresh, and Nicolette Mason on top of the list.

2009: This phase brought the first year of Full Figured Fashion Week, organized by former plus-size model Gwen DeVoe in New York, USA.

2016: NPD group's market study released in 2016 showed that regardless of an average Indian woman choosing a Size-M and the average female American opting for a size 20, many high-end and upscale brands refused to recognize the fact that majority of the women are unable to buy clothes from their variedcollections due to unavailability of the right size.

2017: Many foreign brands embraced the idea of plus-sized clothing by understanding the importance and scope of growth in this niche area, Sports and fitness brands like Nike also launched sizes above 'Large' and encouraged size diversity in the apparel market.

The growth in the plus size apparel market is evident even in the age group of teenagers in the US. According to a 2017 report by the National Purchase Diary Panel Inc, the sale of plus size teems apparel has been on the rise in the recent years.

Table no. 2: Plus-size teens apparel buying pattern and growth

Year	Sales of plus-size clothes (billion dollars)
2016	21.4
2015	20.18
Before 2015	15.05

Source: Asian News International (2017)

According to data collected on the sales of women's plus-size apparel (including those for teenagers) in the United States of America by the NPD Group (a firm dedicated towards market research), sales increased at 6% reaching $21.4 billion in 2016.

Another study conducted by NDP released previously depicted that the percentage of teens in the United States of America purchasing plus-sized readymade apparel nearly increased by two times from 19% in 2012 to 34% in 2015.

1.4 Scope of Growth and Opportunities in the Plus size Apparel Market

Globally, women are demanding extended and larger than usual sized apparels and different measurements around the waistlines and in India, women's apparel sizes have become different than the set apparel sizes offered by both domestic and foreign brands; in the current scenario urban areas include 30% population which demands larger or extended sized apparels and western marketers are obtaining a place in the rapidly growing $20 billion plus-size ready-to-wear apparel business. It was concluded in the study that Indian women are increasingly shopping for plus-size western ready-to-wear apparel, specifically, working women who need bigger or broader size formal and corporate wear (Lahiri, 2006).

The International Obesity Taskforce discovered that in the European area, England stood at the sixth position on the list of level of obese individuals as per the, however,38% of women belonging to Greece were found to over-weight in comparison to 34% women in the US (Adhya, 2006).
Newman investigated in his 2018 research in Germany that 7.44 million women between the ages, 14 to 64 wear US size 14 which is similar to size 44 in according to German Sizing or larger Newman also stated that the changing lifestyle changes, professional world and eatingtrends, lead to an increasing desire and purchase motivation for stylish plus-size clothingin Germany as well as the U.K; Accordingly, women's plus-size clothes trade mission to Europe was found to be funded by the Commerce Department's Office of Textiles and Apparel and the Commercial Service of the United States.

According to a news article in the Times of India in 2012, it was found that the awareness of this plus size opportunity is trickling beyond the physical retail stores and has been spread to other designer boutiques, e-tailers and other niche brands in cities like Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chandigarh and Jaipur. It was concluded that the economics of plus size seems to be gradually growing at a slow pace though, yet opening up opportunities for people across the country.

Most of the brands selling plus-sizes are focussed on women apparels, Men also seek to buy plus size apparels and it gives a good growth segment for these brands. The inclination towards

women's plus size apparels has also been to more of adults and elderly which gives another opportunity for brands functioning in this niche setup (Ghose, 2012).

Asian News International reported in 2017 that the co-founder of LURAP, an online customised plus-size clothing platform- Vidit Sehgal stated that there prevails a perception about woman's beauty which is enhanced by her size and structure of the body, and the notion of fuller and curvy bodied women is considered unattractive and unlikable which makes them feel marginalised as they do not fit the usual clothing dimensions.

Few years ago, over-sized clothing sector was ignored, but now it is finally getting the required consideration and focus from renowned retailers like Biba, Westside, Pantaloons and Mustard etc. Trendy online retailers like Myntra recently grabbed the opportunity to take a dig into the plus-size apparel market with a wide-rangingcollection of brands, offering varied and enhanced sizes from XL to XXXXXL (Karwa, 2017).

1.4.1 Plus Size Brands in the Indian Market (Offline and Online)

Plus-size ready to wear clothing sector has been prevailing in the country with over 20 brands. This is still a niche segment of the market which needs more exploration. The following table shows a list of brands currently offering plus-size ready-to-wear apparels in India

Tabe no. 3: Plus Size Brands in India (Offline And Online)

S. No.	Brand Name	Offline/Retail Stores	Online	Domestic/ Foreign	For Men/Women	Ethnic/Western
1	H&M +	✓	✓	Foreign	Both	Western
2	Pluss	✓	✓	Domestic	Both	Both
3	aLL	✓	✓	Domestic	Both	Both
4	Westside- Sassy Soda, Gia, Diza	✓	✓	Domestic	Females	Both
5	Lakshita	✓	✓	Domestic	Females	Both
6	Altomoda (Pantaloons)	✓	✓	Domestic	Both	Western

7	Amydus	✓	✓	Domestic	Females	Both
8	Faballey Curve		✓	Domestic	Females	Both
9	ASOS Curve	✓	✓	Foreign	Both	Both
10	Lastinch		✓	Domestic	Females	Both
11	Stalk buy Love		✓	Foreign	Females	Western
12	Shein		✓	Foreign	Females	Western
13	Sztori-Myntra		✓	Domestic	Both	Both
14	Nexus-Lifestyle	✓	✓	Domestic	Both	Western
15	Nubella		✓	Foreign	Females	Western
16	Junarose		✓	Foreign	Females	Western
17	Larjjosa Fashion		✓	Domestic	Females	Western
18	Lurap		✓	Foreign	Females	Western
19	BIBA	✓	✓	Domestic	Females	Ethnic
20	AND	✓	✓	Domestic	Females	Western

Source: Self

According to the above table, it is evident that the focus of plus-size apparel brands is more on women as compared to men, therefore it gives a good scope for retailers to emphasise on men's plus-size apparel.

1.5 Vanity sizing

Vanity sizing is an important way in representing the variety or sizing options available in the readymade apparel market. It is a technique where larger than normal sized clothes are labelled as smaller sizes in order to motivate the customers by enhancing their confidence.

For example: Westside by TATA group selling its plus size ethnic wear brand Diza has apparels sized above Extra Large (XL) but they are labelled as S, M, L, XL etc

Vanity sizing is basically aimed at tapping the psychological aspect of the plus-size consumers. It focusses on making the plus-size consumers feel more empowered and less embarrassed to purchase larger than the standard or extended sizes. It tries to fit in the plus-size apparel seekers in the usual clothing ranges which encourages them to buy the readymade apparels.

2. Review of Literature

This section introduces the main subject and focus points of the study by stating the major researches, studies, explorations etc carried on previously with respect to the theme of the topic. It aims at giving out an outline of the earlier investigations so that the current researcher can identify the gaps which have a further scope of understanding and analysis.

2.1 Plus-Size Consumer Behaviour

Consumer behaviour studies provide a deep investigation of general shopping motivations and reasons. (Paulo Jorge Ribeiro Cardoso, 2010), whereas, only a few studies focus and analyse the specific segment of plus-size women and investigate their apparel shopping experience and purchase decisions (Gurrieri, 2014).

While exploring 30 Plus-size female teens were included in the research, all of which in the age bracket in 12-17 years in 2015, Romeo concluded that the major problem related to plus-size clothing that was found in the US area was the functional fit. Also, it was concluded that there was confusion over the plus-size apparel designations which affected the brand loyalty and resulted in lesser purchases in both online and offline portals.

An IPAYE study in 2015 examined twenty plus-size women in the Missouri City on the basis of Renoux's 1973 Theory of Retail Satisfaction which stated that Retail satisfaction is dependent on three major contributors:-

a) Shopping system or shopping structure satisfaction, which is related to the destination of purchase,

b) Buying system satisfaction, which focusses on availability of sizes and variety and

c) Consuming system satisfaction, which relates to the scenario where a customer can get to the store or purchase destination but is unable to find the size, design or colour etc.

A study on size, fit and affordability of plus size clothing was conducted among women of over 16 size in the UK by Otieno in 2005. This study focused on the level of satisfaction of these women and their overall retail experience. It was determined that the majority of the women having size 16 and above were dissatisfied with the retail setup/environment, fashion and sizes available among various UK stores. The main difficulty faced was finding well-fitted fashionable clothes in the larger sizes range.

Vanity sizing became a trend, where smaller sizes were labelled on the ready-to-wear apparels for larger measurements of the plus-sizes, this led to a psychological motivation among plus-size teens to buy clothes and developed a feel-good-factor. (Romeo, 2015)

It was concluded that retailers need to extend their sizes, as there is great interest from plus-size women to demand a broader range of women's wear of retailer and name brand items.

Larger and plus-size women also seek to have similar options to choose from as their smaller counterparts which emphasizes on the need of the retailers to have a wider size option to choose from as such women tend to be disappointed with the size options available in the plus-size range of common ready-to-wear brands. "It was also concluded that the plus-size women were dissatisfied with the lack of appealing merchandise among the larger size options which made them feel disadvantaged of being in the plus-size segment in the US". (Delisia Mathew, 2018)

2.2 Plus-Size Apparel Buying In India

Most of the brands selling plus-sizes are focused on women apparels, Men also seek to buy plus size apparels and it gives a good growth segment for these brands. The inclination towards women's plus size apparels has also been to more of adults and elderly which gives another opportunity for brands functioning in this niche setup (Ghose, 2012).

Chowdhary conducted a study in 1988 on 71 plus-size/curvy size women who had sizes above 16 which is supposed to be under the extended or plus-size category. His study was done based on the below mentioned factors that influenced the buying patterns of these women.

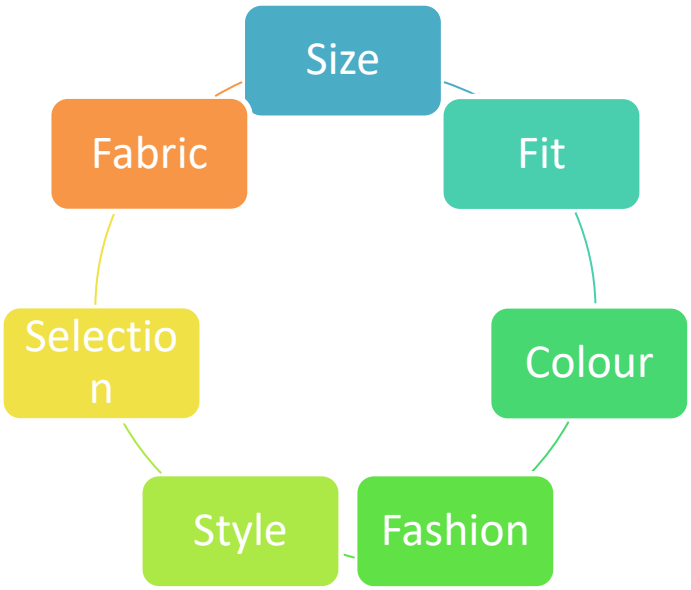


Figure no. 3: Factors Affecting Plus-Size Apparel Buying Behaviour

Source: Chowdhary (1988)

He also concluded that the satisfaction and issues were linked to specific apparels and opinions and satisfaction levels differed with respect to age and size. Fitting and size were the two main highlighted issues. A study done by Kant (2018) in Panjab University, Chandigarh determined that the plus-size clothing options available in the city had a lot of sizing and styling issues which led to inappropriate fit and size especially around the bust area and crotch area, which made these women reject the merchandise.

A 2017 case study by Sharma on BIBA demonstrated that even after several problems faced by plus-size buyers, BIBA, a women's ethnic wear Indian brand managed to enhance its sales as well as increase and retain customer loyalty which eventually became a sizing benchmark in the industry. BIBA's sales were also increased during festival seasons because cultural background of India influences women to buy new ethnic wear for such auspicious occasions, this led to a change in the ready-to-wear ethnic clothes buying patterns among Indian women.

Another article explained that Indians adjust to the foreign sizing dimensions of UK or US sizes but Indians altogether because Indians have a different set of body structure that needs to be catered to by foreign as well local brands in the country. However SmritiIrani, Minister of Women and Child Development, India and former Union Ministermentioned in an interview

with India Today that she seeks to eradicate this issue by launching ‘Size India’ project during the Textile Conclave at the Vibrant Gujarat Summit but she also senses that India being a massive country, with different body sizes, would want awide-ranging size-chart to cater to different regions (Shrivastava, 2019).

2.3 Research Gaps

Changing lifestyles, busy work schedules and youth-oriented demographics in India is increasing and so is body-positivity which enhances the scope of plus-size clothing and fashion market to grow in the country at anexpeditious rate. India has a niche market of plus-size apparels but is a market of lucrative scope in-case of millennial as well as older generations. Therefore, it gives an opportunity to investigate and throw light on this sector as many brands both foreign and national are offering plus-size ready-to-wear apparel even with launching exclusive stores under this category and designating defined sections for retailing of such clothing.

It is very evident that research in this segment of apparel industry needs focus and deep investigation as majorly three studies indicate a fit and size problem which gives good scope for the research to understand the plus-size apparel buying in India.

This analysis can help the retailers (both online and offline), understand the need for extension of sizes and sizing dimensions in for ready-to-wear clothes.

Most of the plus-size apparel related research has been conducted in the US and parts of Europe as discussed in the review of literature and introduction. Given India’s demographics lack of research in this field in India, the relevance of this is significant.

3. Description of Broad Area

The research basis chosen has its genesis spanning over a century of apparel fashion and use. The overwhelming convergence and coinciding of exemplar transformation of key aspects for marketing study of plus size apparel has no parallel. If we look at the past 100 years plus size was unheard of or any corollary. Of that time span it took almost half a century to start standardisation methodology for above normal sizes. Rudimentary as it was based on chest size being the standard. Only in the 1970s did the terminology of body positivity see a slow

beginning.Took another decade in the 1980s for the first advertisement in Vogue to showcase plus fashion.Another decade gone and in 1991 the overlooked first plus size retail foray started. Another 10 years into 2001 for fashion to be incorporated into plus size clothing. The last decade has seen body positivity and vanity sizing becoming mainstream. Only in the last few years the emergence of models especially in India showcasing plus sizes has emerged. Designer and luxury brands have literally jumped on the bandwagon. Took a hundred years to break the mindset and the economically mature marketing realisation that the model sizes account for about 10 percent of actual sales. Of the non addressed 90 percent the major proportion is the plus size. In the fashion segment apparel is the predominant 40 percent of revenue. This has been complimented by unprecedented technological shift towards a digitally oriented platform which directly transforms the consumer behaviour principles. The awareness is supported by technology and accentuated the proposition. The options or preferences emerging are mind boggling as we see a virtual 3 year old defining with sweet clarity the choice.

The engagement in the marketing exercise is a whole new ball game for which the rules are being framed as they become possible and known. The cultural shift in advocacy is reflecting in the corporate consumer service strategies. Thus the genesis of the topic of immense economic value with little research and analysis for informed decision making as the segment long overdue has been created.

4. Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the key factors influencing the consumer attitudes towards plus-size ready-made apparel.
2. To understand the influence of purchase involvement on the attitude of plus-size consumers towards plus-size ready-made apparel.
3. To examine the influence of self-esteem and fashion consciousness on the attitude of plus-size consumers towards plus-size ready-made apparel.
4. To evaluate the influence of brand preference on the consumer attitudes of consumers of plus-size readymade apparel.

The rationale behind this study will be articulated based on existing literature and information, with the organization of first-hand data, which collectively, will allow a meticulous and thoroughexamination of the above stated research objectives.

5. Research Methodology

The emphasis of this study is to understand and analyse how plus-size category consumers tend to explore, evaluate and purchase apparels in an organized retail setup. The researcher aims to understand the buying behaviour of customers involved in purchasing larger sizes and also investigating the major factors influencing such as purchasing and shopping patterns and forming consumer attitudes toward plus-size ready-to-wear apparels.

Consumer behaviour has been studied since decades now and factors affecting buying behaviour have also been into the picture ever since. But understanding how, where and when plus-size buyers seek to buy apparels in a retail setup needs to be analyzed deeply.

5.1 Geographic Area for Research

Organised retail outlets are best setup in metropolitan cities, therefore, the geographic area for this research is prposed to be Delhi, including shopping malls and other organised retail setups.

5.2 Research Design

The researcher plans to explore the plus-size consumer's shopping patterns, purchase motivations, brand preferneces and also understand the factors that affect the buying decisions and undertake a an exploratory research design followed by descriptive research for analyzing the demographics of such consumers.

5.3 Data Collection

1. Primary data will be collected by a survey technique, which will be done with the help of a structured questionnaire and interviews with plus-size customers.

2. Secondary data will be collected from past research papers, articles, books, magazines and websites etc.

Sample Size:

A sample size of 300 plus-size respondents of different age groups, income levels and varied lifestyles will be surveyed, who are exposed to organised retail as well as online buying portals and are involved in buying or exploring plus size clothing from retail setups in Delhi. The sample unit will be the apparel buyers (individual plus size consumers).

Sampling Technique: Collection of primary data for the study is proposed to be done through snowball sampling and convenience sampling techniques.

5.4 Data Analysis

The quantitative and qualitative data will be analysed with application of suitable parametric and non-parametric statistical tools. The statistical analysis will be done with the help of latest available versions of applicable software such as SPSS, MS.Excel, AMOS etc.

6. Proposed Outcome of the Research

Through this research, it is expected to find the basic motivations of purchase with respect to plus-size ready-to-wear apparels .study will help to understand the impact of various demographics such as gender, age, income etc. on the buying decisions of plus-size individuals. Researcher also aims at bifurcating and clarifying the male/female plus-size apparel buying patterns.

Furthermore, it is expected to get results of the shopping experiences and problems faced in case of buying and exploring larger than the usual sizes.

By observing the overweight and broad/large built individuals shopping in-store, the researchers plan to identify the level of self-confidence, hesitations or shyness if prevailing, while exploring and buying plus-size clothes which will help in concluding the in-store experiences of plus-size individuals.

A detailed analysis of this niche sector can give insights to the retailers who wish to target this segment and develop products and its aesthetics to focus on successfully delivering value to plus-size individuals in the country.

The aptness of this research emanates from India's unique situation in terms of size of the population, the demographics (2/3rd of the population is below the age of 35 years), the economic profile of this constituent, their purchasing power, their access to technology and unmatched choices and culturally plutonic shift in terms of buying behaviours, styling and influencing the older generations to change the purchase motivations.

7. References

Adhya. (2006). A growing concern across Europe.A conjoint investigation of the relative importancE. *The Financial Times. 4. Agarwal, S., & Teas, R.K. (2001). Perceived value: Mediating role of perceived risk. Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 9(4), 1-14. Akaah, I. A., & Korgoankar, P. K. (1988).*

Asian News International, N. D. (2017, July 12). *www.hindustantimes.com/fashion-and-trends/the-beauty-curve-here-s-how-the-fashion-industry-embraced-plus-sizes/story-A3zwYFeeZIMAsTs1vQWEpK.html*. Retrieved from www.hindustantimes.com: https://www.hindustantimes.com/fashion-and-trends/the-beauty-curve-here-s-how-the-fashion-industry-embraced-plus-sizes/story-A3zwYFeeZIMAsTs1vQWEpK.html

Azeez, A. (2016). *Plus Side of Indian Fashion: What Does It Mean To Be A Plus Size Woman?*. Retrieved from feminisminindia.com: https://feminisminindia.com/2016/09/02/plus-size-of-indian-fashion/

Chowdhary, U. &. (1988). Plus-size women's clothing interest, satisfactions and dissatisfactions with ready-to-wear apparel. *Perceptual and Motor Skills 66(3)*, 783-788.

Delisia Mathew, L. R. (2018). A qualititaive exploration of perceptions, shopping motivations, and demands of plus size women: An Ethnic Approach. *Journal of Textile and apparel technology and management* .

Department, S. R. (2019). *Value of the domestic apparel market in India from financial year 2010 to 2018* Retrieved from statista.com: https://www.statista.com/statistics/747845/apparel-market-size-india/

Department, S. R. (2019). *Consumer Goods & FMCG Clothing & Apparel*. Retrieved from Statista.com: https://www.statista.com/statistics/747845/apparel-market-size-india/

Future Lifestyle Fashion Investor Deck (2018). *Future Lifestyle Fashion Investor Deck 2018*. Retrieved from www.futurelifestyle.in: https://www.futurelifestyle.in/Admin/pdf/20180611_FLF_Investor_Deck.pdf

Ghose, A. K. (2012). *Fat market for full figures* Retrieved from www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com: https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/sunday-times/deep-focus/Fat-market-for-full-figures/articleshow/14925446.cms

India Brand Equity Foundation. (2018). *https://www.ibef.org/download/IT-ITeS-Report-June-2018.pdf*. Retrieved from www.ibef.org: https://www.ibef.org/download/IT-ITeS-Report-June-2018.pdf

IPAYE, H. (2015). *Exploration of Plus Size Women's Apparel Satisfaction*. Missouri: The Faculty of the Graduate School.

Jha, D. K. (2018). *Domestic apparel market to grow by 12% on robust demand says CMAI*. Retrieved from www.business-standard.com: https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/domestic-apparel-market-to-grow-by-12-on-robust-demand-cmai-118071600951_1.html

Kant, A. K. (2018). A study of dilemma faced by the student population of Panjab University Chandigarh in finding plus size clothing. *International Journal of Applied home science*, 225-231.

Karwa, A. (2017). *Plus size clothing in India*. Retrieved from www.fibre2fashion.com: https://www.fibre2fashion.com/industry-article/7658/plus-size-clothing-in-india

Lahiri, T. (2006). A longitudinal assessment of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction: the dynamic aspect of the cognitive process. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 394-404.

Lauren Gurrieri, H. C. (2014). Queering beauty: Fatshionistas in the fatosphere. *Qualitative Market Research*, 276 - 295.

Lubitz, R. (2016). *The troubling history of the plus-size section — and where it has to go from hereRetrieved* from www.mic.com: https://www.mic.com/articles/159506/the-troubling-history-of-the-plus-size-section-and-where-it-has-to-go-from-here

Newman, J. &. (2018). *Outsize Clothing, December. Mission Statement. (2005). U.S womens plus-size apparel trade mission to the United Kingdom and Germany*. Retrieved from TRADE.GOV: http://trade.gov/doctm/womens_apparel_uk_germany_0205.html

Otieno, R. H.-G. (2005). The unhappy shopper, a retail experience: exploring fashion, fit and affordability. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 298-309.

Paulo Jorge Ribeiro Cardoso, S. C. (2010). Hedonic and utilitarian shopping motivations among Portuguese young adult consumers. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 538-558.

Research, A. (2018). *A Study on Retail Industry Growth in India*. Retrieved from brandface.in: http://brandface.in/retail-industry-growth-in-india/

Romeo, L. D. (2015). Exploring apparel purchase issues with plus-size female teens. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management, 19(2)*, 120-135.

Satyanarayan, S. (2018). SHOPPING: NOW A DIFFERENT BALL GAME ALTOGETHER. Retrieved from https://www.indianretailer.com/magazine/2018/april/SHOPPING-NOW-A-DIFFERENT-BALL-GAME-ALTOGETHER.m117-1-2/

Schiffman, L. G. (2008). *Consumer Behaviour 11e.*

Seema Sharma, D. G. (2017). The 'BIBA' Woman of India:A Model for Women Economic Empowerment. *South Asian Journal of Business and Management Cases,* 89-99.

Shramana Ganguly, R. M. (2015). *Niche brands bring more clothing options for plus-size people.* Retrieved from https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/: https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/retail/niche-brands-bring-more-clothing-options-for-plus-size-people/articleshow/48071214.cms?from=mdr

Shramana Ganguly, R. M. (2015). *Niche brands bring more clothing options for plus-size people.* Retrieved from https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/: https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/retail/niche-brands-bring-more-clothing-options-for-plus-size-people/articleshow/48071214.cms?from=mdr

Shrivastava, N. (2019). *Why Sizing-up India makes sense*. Retrieved from www.asianage.com: https://www.asianage.com/life/fashion/240119/why-sizing-up-india-makes-sense.html

Sinha, C. (2017). *Indian textiles need value chains to come together: Smriti Irani*. Retrieved from indiatoday.in: https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/interview/story/20170731-smriti-irani-interview-indian-textiles-ministry-1025315-2017-07-24

Smith, P. R. (2004). Marketing communications: an integrated approach. Kogan Page Publishers.

MANAV RACHNA
Vidyanatariksha

Dr. O.P. Bhalla Central Library
Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies
(A deemed-to-be-university under section 3 of UGC Act 1956)

SIMILARITY VERIFICATION CERTIFICATE

Title: Plus size brands : A study of consumer Attitudes and Brand preferences w.r.t readymade Apparel.

Researcher: Ms. Jasleen Rana Registration Number: 18/PhD/049

Supervisor: Dr. Deepti Dabas Department: FMS

This is to certify that the above mentioned Short Synopsis/Thesis was scanned for similarity index through Turnitin Software on 10/06/24 with submission ID 2399304491 and the similarity index was found to be 8 %. The complete report running into 27 Pages, 6184 Word count with File Size 3153 KB is being forwarded to the Research Supervisor/DRC/DRB for review.

Date: 10/6/24

Dr. Rajesh Kumar
University Librarian
Dr. O.P. Bhalla Central Library
Manav Rachna International
Institute of Research & Studies
Faridabad

After excluding 1 Research papers co-authored with the Research Supervisor, as annexed as A

The complete report of the above Short Synopsis/Thesis has been reviewed and the similarity index is below the accepted norms as per the University Grants Commission (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations 2018. The Short Synopsis/Thesis may be considered for further processing

Research Scholar

Research Supervisor

PLUS-SIZE BRANDS: A STUDY OF CONSUMER ATTITUDE AND BRAND PREFERENCES WITH RESPECT TO READYMADE APPAREL

by Jasleen Rana

Submission date: 10-Jun-2024 09:45AM (UTC+0530)
Submission ID: 2399304491
File name: UDE_AND_BRAND_PREFERENCES_WITH_RESPECT_TO_READYMADE_APPAREL.docx (336.74K)
Word count: 6184
Character count: 35383

PLUS-SIZE BRANDS: A STUDY OF CONSUMER ATTITUDE AND BRAND PREFERENCES WITH RESPECT TO READYMADE APPAREL

ORIGINALITY REPORT

Dr. Rajesh Kumar
University Librarian
Dr. O.P. Bhalla Central Library
Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies
Faridabad

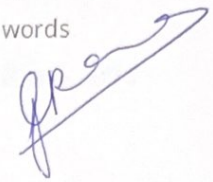
8%	7%	1%	3%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

Excluding matches less than 14 words

After excluding ... research papers co-authored with the Research Supervisor, as annexed as ... A

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	www.dia.com Internet Source	1%
2	www.hindustantimes.com Internet Source	1%
3	www.indianretailer.com Internet Source	1%
4	scholar.lib.vt.edu Internet Source	1%
5	www.shanlaxjournals.in Internet Source	1%
6	issuu.com Internet Source	1%
7	asianage.com Internet Source	<1%
8	shodhgangotri.inflibnet.ac.in Internet Source	<1%

9	Submitted to London School of Science & Technology Student Paper	<1 %
10	ptechcloud.com Internet Source	<1 %
11	Submitted to University of Bedfordshire Student Paper	<1 %
12	www.scielo.br Internet Source	<1 %
13	ansible.unipu.hr Internet Source	<1 %
14	economictimes.indiatimes.com Internet Source	<1 %
15	Mahasweta Saha, Sangeeta Sahney. "Exploring the relationships between socialization agents, social media communication, online shopping experience, and pre-purchase search: a moderated model", Internet Research, 2021 Publication	<1 %
16	Submitted to Manav Rachna International University Student Paper	<1 %

Exclude quotes	Off	Exclude matches	< 14 words
Exclude bibliography	On